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DEFENSE AND SECURITY MONITOR
Insights from Forecast International

This Week in the Russia-Ukraine War (February 7)

February 7, 2025 - by Forecast International

A snapshot of recent news from sources around the world on the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war.

Source: dvids/Corporal Bryan Carter, 4 Wing Imaging

Deliveries of French Mirage 2000 fighters to the Ukrainian Air Force began this past week. Image – DVIDS/Corporal Bryan Carter

Political Developments

Russia's Foreign Ministry urged the U.S. to clarify its stance on ending the Ukraine conflict, stating Moscow would respond accordingly. Meanwhile, Trump and Putin have not spoken since Trump's inauguration.

However, Russia rejects a ceasefire or freeze to the conflict, Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said this week, claiming that the West would use a pause to build up the military potential of Ukraine.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said it would be dangerous to exclude Ukraine from any talks about ending the war, following reports that U.S. officials were "already talking" with members of the Russian government about ways to end the war. Zelenskyy also said Trump could pressure Russia with the threat of sanctions against its energy and banking industries.

Multiple international organizations, including the European Union, support forming a tribunal to prosecute Russian leaders responsible for planning the invasion of Ukraine.

A Russian singer-songwriter who spoke out against the war in 2022 died this week after falling from a window during a police raid on his apartment in St. Petersburg.

Military Assistance to Ukraine

The Ukrainian Air Force has begun taking delivery of French Mirage 2000 combat aircraft, officials confirmed this week. French President Emmanuel Macron pledged the delivery in June last year as part of France's military support for Ukraine.

Also this week, the Netherlands delivered more F-16 fighter jets to the Ukrainian Air Force.

President Donald Trump promoted a deal granting access to Ukraine's rare earth minerals as compensation for Washington's $375.8 billion wartime aid to Kyiv. Speaking Monday at the White House, he called for "equalization" in return for U.S. support. Much of those rare earth mineral deposits, however, are in the east, in provinces contested or controlled by the Russian military.

Trump's comments come as reports emerge that Washington briefly cut military assistance to Ukraine as part of a wider review of foreign aid — before later restoring it.

Trump's efforts to shutter the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) could have negative impacts for Ukraine. While the agency doesn't supply military aid, it could impact other

government infrastructure indirectly supporting the war effort, such as the nation's healthcare system and energy projects.

London continues to increase its military aid to Ukraine, Prime Minister Keir Starmer said this week, and will this year provide an unprecedented level of support to the embattled country. The British government has pledged at least GBP3 billion ($3.7 billion) for security assistance to Ukraine in 2025.

> "We must do all that we can to support Ukraine's defense. That means stabilizing the front line, providing the kit and training that they need, and that's why this year the UK will give more military support to Ukraine than ever before." – British Prime Minister Keir Starmer

Latvia has begun producing Patria 6×6 armored vehicles for delivery to the Ukrainian military, the Ukrainian Embassy to Latvia said this week following a visit by Ambassador Anatolii Kutsevol to the Valmiera manufacturing plant.

The United Kingdom will lead the next meeting of the Ukraine Defense Contact Group, a collection of international partners that manage military aid to Ukraine. An upcoming meeting in Brussels will mark the 26th time the group has met and the first time that a meeting will not be hosted by a U.S. defense secretary.

Battlefield Updates

The Ukrainian military has performed over 220 operations in the last six months involving deep strikes inside Russian territory. These missions say the deployment of over 3,500 drones. Numerous operations includes the targeting of Russian air defense systems.

Russia continues to fire missiles and drones at targets inside Ukraine, aiming to disrupt Ukraine's power grid network, in particular. Moscow fired 165 missiles and attack drones of various types on February 1, followed by another wave of attack drones on the night of February 4-5. A ballistic missile salvo targeted Izyum, as well.

According to Ukrainian defenders, the accuracy of the North Korean missiles in use with the Russian military has improved since last year. The North Korean missiles' accuracy increased to within 50-100 meters of the intended target. This development indicates that North Korea has been able to improve the capability of its military systems through employment on the battlefield in Ukraine.

Ukrainian intelligence claimed that North Korea would transfer another 150 KN-23 short-range ballistic missiles to Russia in 2025.

On the ground, Ukraine this week renewed offensive operations in Russia's Kursk province. On Thursday, the Ukrainian military said that it had captured over 900 Russian soldiers in battles in the region. Kyiv regularly exchanges prisoners of war with Moscow, receiving back 150 POWs this week from a swap agreement.

The new Ukrainian push in Kursk comes as Vladimir Putin faces growing discontent over the Kremlin's handling of the situation in the area. Russia has deployed its own forces to Kursk, but has also leaned on soldiers from North Korea, who are said to have taken heavy casualties in the fighting.

Ukrainian troops have been losing ground around Pokrovsk, a city in eastern Ukraine that serves as a logistics hub for several cities in the region. Moscow is trying to capture as much territory as it can ahead of any potential negotiations to end the war.

Ukraine's military leadership is hoping to shake up the structure of the Armed Forces, with the creation of corps-sized battle groups, President Zelensky announced this week. The reform aims to improve Ukraine's command and control.

The U.S. Congressional Research Service released a report discussing the Ukrainian military's performance and outlook in the war. The Ukrainian Armed Forces have effectively integrated Western aid and demonstrated tactical flexibility during the war, but they face challenges such as personnel losses and equipment limitations, making it difficult to sustain momentum against Russian forces.

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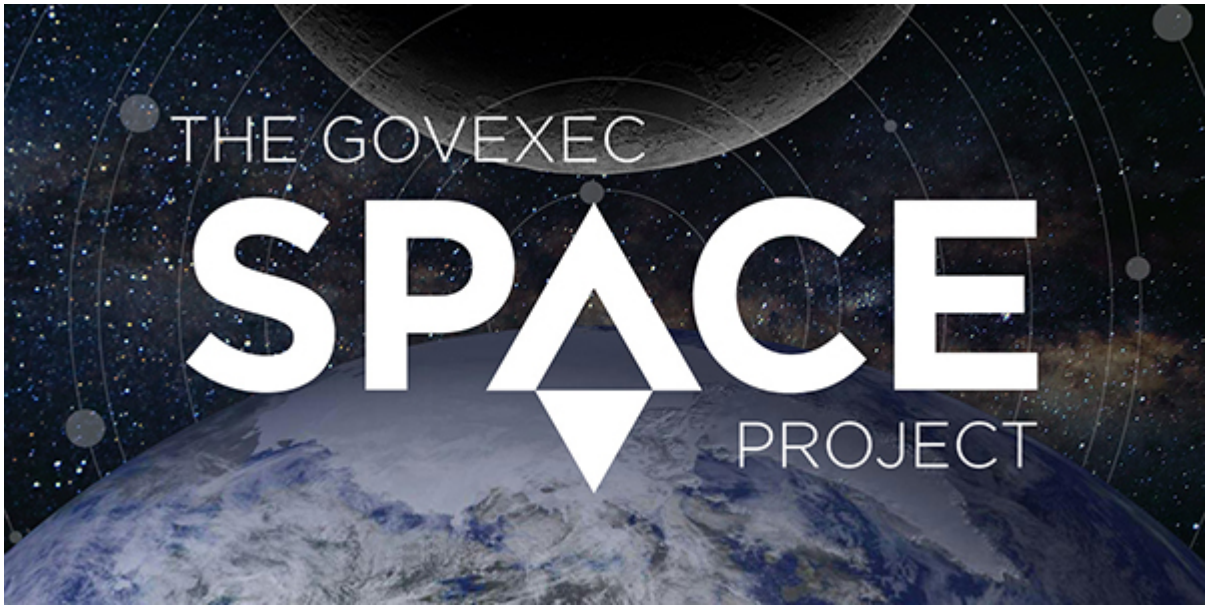

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